

# PLUM CURCULIO

NOT KNOWN TO  
OCCUR IN IDAHO



**Common Name:** Plum curculio

**Scientific Name:** *Conotrachelus nenuphar*

The plum curculio is widely distributed east of the Rocky Mountains and is native to North America. The plum curculio can be very destructive, attacking not only plums, but also apples, peaches, pears, cherries, quince and other wild and cultivated fruits. Injury results from the spring feeding of adult beetles, from female ovipositioning in the fruit, from the feeding of larvae within the fruit and finally from the early fall feeding of adult beetles.

## Host

This species is primarily a pest of plums and peaches, but also damage cherries, nectarines, and apricots. Various species of wild plums are also good hosts. The adults will feed on and damage apples and pears, but few larvae are usually found in these hosts.

## Description

The adult plum curculio is a small, hard-bodied, brownish-black snout beetle mottled with white and orange areas. It has four prominent black humps on its top surface. It is about 6 mm (1/4 inch) long and has a long snout, the end of which bears chewing mouthparts. The fully-grown larva is about 9 mm (3/8 inch) long and is a yellowish-white, legless grub with a brown head.

## Life Cycle

Plum curculio adults overwinters under debris in and around the yard, or in protected places at an orchard. They become active and return to trees after spells of warm weather in spring, often around the time that apple trees bloom. The adults feed on the developing fruit. Females insert eggs under the skin, then make a slit in the fruit to prevent the expanding tissues from crushing the eggs. After the eggs hatch, the larvae feed on the flesh and developing seeds of the fruit. When full grown they cut their way out of the fruit and burrow one to two inches into the soil to pupate. Adult weevils emerge in August. They feed on fruit for a short time, sometimes causing late-season injuries, before scattering to winter shelters.

